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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the changing attitudes and personal development of 20 college students participating in an advanced class on ethical outdoor leadership. Students took part in short outdoor activities and tasks for which they selected their own leaders, determined strategies, and evaluated their task and group process performances. Course assignments included a journal and a final creative project symbolizing the student's understanding of ethical outdoor leadership. A phenomenological approach was used to analyze student journals and final projects. Analysis revealed three themes: changing concepts of ethical outdoor leadership over time; a personal journey of self related to ethical outdoor leadership; and connections among concepts of ethical leadership, the outdoors, and the practices of outdoor leadership. Students' ability to conceive of themselves as leaders was a key issue in the development and application of ethical outdoor leadership skills. Journal entries point toward self-reflective processes and personal psychological application of concepts and models as central to that conceptual shift. Women in the class had to overcome sex role assumptions about leaders in order to achieve the change in self-concept that allowed identification as an ethical outdoor leader. Students saw the role of leadership primarily in terms of hands-on activities and task completion, suggesting that there is much work to be done to connect the concepts of ethical leadership with the practices of outdoor leadership. (SV)

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LEARNING ABOUT ETHICAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP

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Paper presented at
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LEARNING ABOUT ETHICAL OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP

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Outdoor adventure programming has responded to changing societal and individual needs by enlarging the goals and objectives of programs beyond the boundaries of the outdoor trip. Program missions, goals and objectives regularly include integrating people with and without disabilities, reinforcing appropriate school and societal behaviour in youth at risk, enhancing the self-esteem of young people, teaching environmentally sound behaviour, and enhancing restorative healing for women survivors of abuse and people with terminal illness. These broader goals and objectives place different demands upon the outdoor leader and situate an outdoor trip within a larger context. This larger context connects outdoor leadership with such concepts as power, social change, vision, ethics, and values. This research project used an advanced university class on ethical outdoor leadership to explore the intersection of the scholarship about ethical leadership, the practices of outdoor leaders, and the context of the outdoors.

Literature Review

Priest (1986) surveyed programs about their philosophies, practices and perspectives on training outdoor leaders in five countries. The programs indicated that the primary purpose of training competent outdoor leaders was "...to ensure a positive experience for participants, to teach competence in outdoor skills to participants, to reduce the number of accidents to participants, to reduce the amount of damage to the environment, and to ensure the learning objectives of the programs are met" (Priest, 1986, p. 48). The importance of basic skill and knowledge competencies in outdoor recreation have been sufficiently discussed and is the hallmark of any safe program. A comparison of Priest's analysis of leadership competencies and program components suggests that characteristics such as empathy and awareness, judgment based on experience, flexible leadership style and a healthy self-concept and ego were important. However, training components directed at these areas were less likely to be included or emphasized in outdoor leadership training programs than safety, instructional, and activity skills.

The primary structure for teaching a flexible leadership style revolves around the situational leadership model as developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1977, 1982) and Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) and presented in Ford and Blanchard (1985). This model is based upon a specific definition of power and relates group maturity to leadership style with the leader doing most of the decision-making. Priest (1987) and Phipps (1986) have worked extensively in modifying and applying the basic model to outdoor situations, and Jordan (1989) used some of the components within her proposal for a new model of outdoor leadership. The situational leadership model, however, does not address issues such as vision and social change, self-reflection for psychological, spiritual and moral understandings and practices, questions about the role of power, empowerment, shared leadership, and ethical decision-making (Bennis, 1989; Terry, 1991).

Scholars and practitioners struggle with the definition and description of ethical leadership, in particular, which is seen to be far more complex than competency in specific skills. The discussion has included concepts such as transformational leadership (Bennis & Nanus, 1988; Burns, 1989; MacGregor, 1986), reflective leadership (Schon, 1989), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1980), and authenticity and leadership (Palmer, 1990; Terry, 1987). Each perspective assumes a basic skill and knowledge compe-

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tency as a foundation for the more complex aspects of leadership. Bennis quotes from the Administrative Science Quarterly:

> As we survey the path leadership theory has taken, we spot the wreckage of "trait theory," the "great man" theory, and the "situationist" critique, leadership styles, functional leadership, and, finally, leaderless leadership, to say nothing of bureaucratic leadership, charismatic leadership, group-centered leadership, reality-centered leadership, leadership by objective, and so on. The dialectic and reversals of emphases in this are very nearly rival the tortuous twists and turns of child-rearing practices, and one can paraphrase Gertrude Stein by saying, 'a leader is a follower is a leader.' (1985, p. 39)

For this study, ethics refers to a process of reflection and decision-making about desired outcomes of action. Ethics is the "...intersection of memory and hope, embodying values and world views and having to assess those views' applicability to future prospects" (Palmer, 1990, p. 47). Ethics maps both what is happening and what ought to happen. Ethics is an integral part of leadership (Autry, 1992; Bennis, 1993; Greenleaf, 1980; Palmer, 1990; Shapiro, 1988; Terry, 1991).

The descriptions of ethical leadership imply dynamic interactions between followers, leaders, the world of social influences, and the environment as a whole. Ethical leadership becomes not a destination, but a process, a constant dynamic system (Eisler & Love, 1990; Wheatley, 1992). Shapiro defines ethical leadership as "people dancing over ever changing terrain to often changing music while trying to balance community and individualism, freedom, justice and equality, order and compassion, competency with cold bureaucracy, ambition with tyranny and conscience with dogmatism or inaction" (1988, p. 2). Terry states that ethical leadership

> ...empowers human beings to claim ultimate fulfillment. Thus, leadership is not reducible to traits, skills, organization, power, vision, or even ethical vision alone. It is a fundamental and profound engagement with the world and human condition. At the deepest level, leaders are not over followers (a mistake Burns makes), nor are they necessarily in front. They are with, in dialogue and compassion, articulating and acting on what both have in common, their shared humanity. (1991, p. 7)

Ethical leadership is fundamentally about power—who has power, how it is used and shared, who defines power and issues, and who makes the decisions (Bormann & Bormann, 1972; Cronin, 1989; Kokopeli & Lakey, 1978; MacGregor, 1966; Sergiovanni, 1990; Wheeler & Chinn, 1989). The scholarship on ethical leadership indicates that definitions and operational use of power must go beyond power over to power with, shared power, and empowerment (Autry, 1992; Barrentine, 1993; Helgessen, 1990). Hagborg (1984) explores in detail a concept of personal power related to an individual's sense of self, reflection and altruism, all relevant to the scholarship on outdoor leadership.

There also seems to be some indication that men and women adopt different leadership styles and strategies (Bannertine, 1993; Helgessen, 1990; Jordan, 1991; Mitten & Dutton, 1993; Roberts & Drogin, 1993; Wheeler & Chinn, 1989) Helgessen's (1990) interviews of women executives indicated differences in sharing power and information, structuring roles and relationships, and prioritizing values and objectives. Bannertine (1993) and Helgessen (1990) found that women developed very different visions and metaphors related to leadership, relationships between leaders and followers, and the objectives of an organization.

In summary, ethical leadership is described as complex relationships and interactions among elements such as power, empowerment, ethical decision-making, self-awareness, self-reflection, role of followers, and the ability to laugh at oneself as part of a dynamic process of achieving a specific task (Autry, 1992; Bennis, 1989; Bennis & Nanus, 1988; Burns, 1989; Shapiro, 1988;

Terry, 1991). These elements stand in sharp contrast to the purposes of training outdoor leaders such as ensuring a positive experience, teaching competence in outdoor skills, and reducing the number of accidents or damage to the environment. Self-awareness and self-reflection becomes an essential process for the ethical leader that has not been explicitly emphasized or taught in outdoor leadership training.

This research project was designed to explore: (1) What is the meaning of ethical outdoor leadership for the students? (2) How do the students connect concepts of ethical leadership with the standards and practices of outdoor leadership? (3) How would the students connect the concepts of ethical outdoor leadership with themselves?

The Context

An advanced class on ethical outdoor leadership was selected for the research because it was an elective and directed specifically at leadership competency. There were 20 third and fourth year university students in the class, of which 11 were women and nine were men. They ranged from 22 years to 44 years of age, with a mean age of 24 years. All of the students in the class had completed or were completing a field work experience where they worked in a recreation leadership position. Three of the students were directors of residential camps. Four of the students had participated in a university backpacking course. All but three had camping and canoeing experience. All students indicated recreation leadership positions on their resumes ranging from activity leaders in city park's programs to coordinating major, competitive events. In addition, all of the students had completed two courses related to administration theory and leadership. All but two students were employed part-time in positions of supervisory responsibilities (e.g., supervisor at a fast food store, special events coordinator, volunteer coordinator, supervisor of recreation staff at a nursing home, group home leader, staff director of a residential camp).

Since the course was presented in three-hour evening time periods (over a 12-week term) on a university campus, the challenge was to provide experiential components with limited access to the outdoors. Therefore, case studies and videos about the outdoors or outdoor expeditions, short outdoor activities, and initiative games became the primary avenues for including the outdoor perspective. The topics, readings, and assignments[1] were determined by the instructor. The two course assignments were a journal about ethical outdoor leadership and a creative final project. The journal was handed in three times during the term and documented how the readings related to the individual student or the class activities. The final creative project was to symbolize each student's connection and understanding of ethical outdoor leadership.

The class structure and process reflected processes identified in the scholarship about ethical leadership and are an adaptation of the Tavistock model (Weisbord, 1993). According to Bennis (1989), learning about leadership requires more than skills, although they are necessary. Learning about ethical leadership means developing character or vision, inventing a self-identity as leader, knowing one's own values, learning from experience through reflection and resolution, and developing ways to define reality and communicate it to others. Therefore, the class as a whole had to select leaders, determine strategies and activities to complete tasks, and evaluate their task and group process performance. The instructor acted as facilitator and provided process feedback related to the group's behaviour, decisions, and strategies.

Phenomenological Analysis

Phenomenology is one method of treating descriptions of complex phenomena as they are actually experienced by individuals (Giorgi, 1985; van Manen, 1990). It is a type of qualitative research from the field of psychology that attempts to discover meanings in an individual's stream of consciousness, sorting out and systematizing meanings of a total situation or interaction as a complex gestalt. It is particularly suited to exploring students' understanding of ethical

[1] A copy of the course syllabus may be obtained by contacting the authors.

outdoor leadership, because the context and interaction among students, instructor, readings, and experiences form a whole system. The "stream of consciousness" of the student is understood as a real process and the focus of the inquiry because the researcher is interested in the specifically human mode of organization of experiences (in this case, about ethical outdoor leadership). The method transforms, through a set procedure, the subject's experience into ethical outdoor leadership language. The intent is to arrive at a general category by going through the concrete expressions, rather than applying abstractions or pre-selected criteria.

In this research, phenomena within the journals and final creative projects were selected for their relevance to ethical outdoor leadership. Specifically, the analysis of the journals and final creative projects focused on components of ethical leadership as identified in the course readings, examples and events that linked ethical leadership with outdoor leadership, and the students' portrayal of sense of self as related to ethical outdoor leadership and followership. The fact that the students freely choose their journal topics (within a range of readings) and final creative projects would suggest that most examples are highly important for the students.

To provide a different perspective and make explicit the connections between instructor, class and students, one of the researchers was not connected with the development and presentation of the class. The researchers synthesized and integrated the insights contained in the transformed meaning units into a consistent description about ethical outdoor leadership as perceived by the students. The four essential steps of the phenomenological process applied in this research were (Giorgi, 1985; van Manen, 1990):

(1) Reading the entire journal to get a general sense of the "naive" descriptions presented by the students and the structure of the students' experience. The specific description of the situated experience remained faithful to the concrete subject and specific situations.

(2) Reading the entire journal again for specific aims or "meaning units."[2] In this case, the specific meaning units related to (a) the description of ethical outdoor leadership and followership, (b) connection of ethical leadership and outdoor leadership readings, and/or (c) the connection between course topic and experiences with the students' sense of themselves as ethical outdoor leaders. Meaning units were selected for their relevance to ethical outdoor leadership and the analysis and descriptions of the structures were a reduction. The structures sought related to ethical outdoor leadership and may be typical or general rather than universal.

(3) Reading through the meaning units and expressing the insights contained in them more directly within general categories or themes.

(4) Synthesizing all of the transformed meaning units into a consistent statement regarding the experience.

Each of the four steps was done individually by the authors and then collaboratively, working through differences of interpretation and analysis to develop a synthesized and consistent statement regarding the experience of the students.

Analysis of Journals

The purposes of the journal were to create an opportunity and medium for the students' self-reflection, help students apply the concepts and models of ethical outdoor leadership to situations and themselves, and provide the text for analysis. Pollack (quoted in Bennis, 1989), Faulkner (quoted in Bennis, 1989), and Bennis (1989) all indicate that codifying one's thinking through writing is an important step in inventing oneself, knowing what one thinks, and the best way of learning from yourself who you are and what you believe. The student could decide whether to apply the models and concepts of

[2] Phenomenological research studies meaning units (Giorgi, 1985; van Manen, 1990). Meaning units are portions of a phenomenon, interaction or situation that reflect changes in the meaning for the individual based upon a specific framework (i.e., psychological, sociological, or anthropological frameworks).

ethical leadership to her/his personal experience or to examine the concepts in an abstract and scholarly manner based upon readings, case studies, course activities, and hypothetical examples outside of his/her life. All of the women in the class used the journal as an opportunity to explore the application of the readings, models and activities to their own personal context while the men took advantage of both strategies.

The analysis of the journals in relationship to the three research question areas and major concepts of ethical leadership and outdoor leader practices resulted in three themes: (1) changing concepts of ethical outdoor leadership (the initial definition and a revised definition at the end of the course), (2) a personal "journey" of self related to ethical outdoor leadership, and (3) connections between concepts of ethical leadership, the outdoors, and the practices of outdoor leadership.

Changing Concept of Ethical Outdoor Leadership

The change from the initial definitions of ethical outdoor leadership to the final definitions reflected a depth of understanding about the student as leader and follower, a more complex description of power, a dynamic connection between the roles of leader and follower, and the use of ethical language to describe the role and issues facing an ethical outdoor leader. This change parallels the writings on ethical leadership that relate leadership to becoming an integrated human being and the ability to tolerate and embrace the ambiguity and complexity of the world. Bennis (1989) suggests that successful leaders surpass less successful colleagues primarily because they learn more from all their experiences and learn early in their careers to be comfortable with ambiguity.

The Initial Definitions: The initial journal assignment was for the individual students to define ethical outdoor leadership and followership and rate themselves against their own definition. The focus of the students' initial definitions of ethical outdoor leadership was based upon a concept of power over participants and an ability to control the behaviour of others in relation to a specific goal. This was very much in keeping with the situational model proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1977; 1982), which they had studied in other courses. These concepts of power are evident in the following quotes:

> *A leader always felt comfortable, was always enthusiastic and always directed those around them. (journal, female student)*

> *My personal view of leadership is the ability to direct and channel the efforts of others. It involves not only knowing what you want others to do, but possessing the ability to get others to do what you want them to do. Therefore, inherent in leadership is some form of power—the ability to control and direct the efforts of others. (journal, male student)*

The research specifically focused on how the students connected the concepts of ethical outdoor leadership to themselves. Many students described an ethical outdoor leader as "perfect" or "without fault." The initial definitions were abstract concepts describing the characteristics and abilities of someone else. The definitions were often accompanied with statements about a lack of confidence in the student's sense of self and ability. The students were not the actors in their definitions, the characteristics and abilities were not part of the students' self-concepts, and many clearly communicated that they did not consider themselves as leaders or possessing leadership capability.

> *Leadership: I have always imagined a leader to be someone above myself with great power. One who is in a cloak, but faceless. (journal, male student)*

> *Personally, being a leader is a quality that is seen as an unreachable icon rather than an obtainable goal. This is definitely something that I wish to change about myself. (journal, female student)*

Several journals provided a counterpoint to the main theme, as some students indicated experience with leadership positions or specific skills. These textual segments were interesting and seemed at variance with later segments in those same jour-

nals that highlighted a lack of confidence or willingness to undertake a leadership role.

> *Leadership [is] the ability each one of us possesses to lead a group or another individual by using skills such as persuasion, competency, trust, understanding and listening. Leadership involves responsibilities to self and others in choosing and making decisions that will benefit everyone. (journal, female student)*

> *As a leader, I have gained an understanding of the importance not only of trying to determine thought patterns of myself and group members, but also the importance of feelings and other components of an individual's awareness. (journal, male student)*

Most of the journals indicated that the students had not thought about the characteristics of an ethical outdoor follower. If they defined ethical outdoor follower at all, it was often as a reactive, somewhat passive role for the women and a more active, although reactive, role for the men.

> *Followership meant being the one who had no opinions, having to listen to whatever the leader said and not having much of a say in anything. (journal, female student)*

> *Followership—the accepting of another person's lead in a manner which is beneficial to both the follower (increased self-esteem, personal development) and the leader (potential accomplishment of goals, redefining of goals). This means that the follower has to be actively involved, this means listening and providing feedback, not just passively tagging along. (journal, male student)*

Although the second quote does talk about "not passively tagging along," the specific roles of a follower are reactive: maintaining group goals, listening to someone else, accepting another's lead, and providing feedback to some other initiative.

The Revised Definitions: The revised definitions of ethical outdoor leadership and followership were entered into the journals at the end of the course. The revised definitions of ethical outdoor leadership showed a move from a definition focused on power and control to one that emphasized empowerment, egalitarian relationships, empathy, love and courage. The concept of ethical became not simply deciding moral issues or evaluating what goes wrong, but included tools, attitudes, values and beliefs that an individual uses and shares and characteristics she or he can develop only through self-reflection.

> *Leadership is hard to define now because it is in a position of constant change. The idea of servant leadership is still center most in my definition—maybe even more so now. As a servant leader, we take responsibility for the group, explore who we are, build self-esteem, and grow as people. We put others needs in front of our own. We lead through others, empowering them to take control. This is not an easy form of leadership. (journal, female student)*

> *...in discussing concepts such as connecting, ethics, followership, and growth in the group setting it is clear that a leader must not only focus on common goals, but work for the betterment of those they lead. That is, the leader must work to provide an environment that enables each individual in the group to become the best they can be on a personal level, and work for their own freedom and potential as individuals.... Leadership requires a constant consideration and attention to those you lead. (journal, male student)*

> *Initially, I saw direction to be some form of coercive control, that a leader made people do what he or she wanted—which I equated to mean do what I want you to do. Not only is this form of control unrealistic to achieve over people most of the time, I see it as being very dangerous. I think that what really matters is the ability to earn people's trust. Great things can be accomplished by groups if they can trust their leader's abilities, honesty, and integrity. For this reason, and perhaps many more than I am able to identify at this moment, I would say that trust is the one thing that makes a leader. (journal, male student)*

The students began to express a sense of competency in learning ethical values, attitudes and behaviours over time. The content of the definitions was expanded, provided a greater recognition of people-oriented skills, and demonstrated an understanding of the

complexity and ambiguity of ethical outdoor leadership.

The revised definitions demonstrated that the students saw commonalities in the concepts of followership and leadership. Somewhere in the course, they began to conceive of ethical outdoor followership and leadership as largely overlapping concepts.

> *This exercise has made me realize that most of the characteristics I feel are important for an ethical leader to hold, I also feel are important for an ethical follower to hold. (journal, female student)*

> *So I can stand here today*
> *With my branches touching yours*
> *Knowing how to follow*
> *And learning how to lead.*
> *(final creative project, female student)*

Furthermore, this connection may have acted as a bridge by which the students began to conceive of themselves as leaders. Initially, leaders and followers were seen as separate and distinct. Most of the students did not initially conceive of themselves as leaders; they implicitly considered themselves followers. Because there was little or no overlap between their concepts of leadership and followership, they seemed to conclude that if they were followers, then they couldn't be leaders. As the term progressed, the students began to see a connection between the concepts and characteristics of leadership and followership. Furthermore, the students saw this relationship as reciprocal in their final writings. As the students began to view the concepts of ethical outdoor leadership and followership as similar, rather than mutually exclusive, they may have also begun to see that they potentially can be ethical outdoor leaders.

> *I have found that leadership and followership have a lot more in common than I ever imagined. Both leadership and followership are part of a dynamic system. One could not exist without the other. They both offer the opportunity to grow and develop but they also offer the opportunity for self-exploration, putting others' needs before your own, and learning responsibility. (journal, female student)*

This is consistent with the writings on ethical leadership which emphasize the relationship between leader and follower (Autry, 1992; Bannertine, 1993; Helgessen, 1990; Greenleaf, 1980; Kelley, 1991; Shapiro, 1988). Bormann and Bormann (1972) indicated that a member's role (including the leader) is worked out jointly by the individual and the group. Miller, Wackman, Nunnally & Miller (1988) saw leadership and followership as a dance and to become an effective leader, one must be an effective follower. Bennis (1989, p. 63) indicated that "leaders are self-directed, but learning and under-standing are the keys to self-direction, and it is in our relationships with others that we learn about ourselves...leaders learn from others, but they are not made by others."

Perhaps the most remarkable change in students' definitions was how they related the concept of ethical outdoor leadership to themselves. Their journals began to give evidence that the students were developing a stronger, more positive sense of self, a sense of themselves as leaders, an understanding of leaders as human beings, and a perspective on the difficulty of evaluating such concepts as ethical outdoor leadership and followership. Ethical outdoor leadership was no longer an abstract, theoretical model, but attributes that they themselves could own or express.

> *When I read what others said of me I saw the following words: optimistic, communication skills, listening skills, morale builder, compassionate, sense of humor, self-reliance, courage, and tenacity. It was the first time I looked at myself as others saw me and I was in awe of what I saw. I had no idea that others saw me this way. In my first journal entry I said I could never be a leader if I had to possess all the skills that Cronin deemed important. Somehow and somewhere I have developed and demonstrated the attributes that Cronin believed important for a leader to possess. (journal, female student)*

> *Leadership doesn't involve a superhuman, it involves an understanding of self and ability. A good leader knows when they need help or when someone else can offer something else. They are also not afraid of this which might show them as weak. In our class, you brought in others to teach and run activities.*

You also gave [us] the chance to teach as well. A leader to me now is an ordinary individual who realizes that they have something to offer and can give it to others in a way that is productive. (journal, male student)

The students identified in their journals two important exercises related to this change: the peer evaluation process and "sugar-grams." The entire class was responsible for developing the criteria and process of peer evaluation. The evaluations were turned in during the last class and simply calculated with the final grade. The "sugar-grams" were a compilation of the positive capabilities of each student as identified by all the other students in the class. So, each student received a list of comments by colleagues stating her or his capabilities and strengths.

A Personal Journey of Self Related to Ethical Outdoor Leadership

It was noteworthy to trace how the students connected the concepts of ethical leadership with their own lives and self-concepts. First, the entrance into self-reflection occurred most often with the readings about ethical leadership. Of these, the most important were Cronin (1989), Hagborg (1984), Miller et al. (1988), and Terry (1987). The models of ethical leadership were applied not to a leadership position or influencing a group, but to a personal analysis for the individual student or as a means to understand and resolve a specific leadership or relationship issue from the student's point-of-view.

The first is that prior to taking this course I was quite narrow minded. My belief was that in terms of group dynamics you were either a leader choosing to lead the group or a follower deciding to follow. This last series of readings [Miller et al.; Hagborg; Palmer] has broadened my perspective on this issue, thus eroding my somewhat concrete belief. (journal, female student)

Where am I on the power continuum conceptualized by Hagborg? I feel like I am in different stages at different times and with different people I feel the same way... However, whenever my authority is challenged, I have been known to come down one or two levels in the past to get my way.... Level four is a stage which I am gradually becoming familiar with. (journal, male student)

Second, the students talked about and conceived of the exploration of ethical outdoor leadership as a "journey." Many of the final creative projects were entitled "Leadership—A Journey Into Ourselves," "A Journey of Self-Exploration," and "The Journey." Examples from journal entries and final creative projects included the following:

Outdoor leadership implies some sort of journey. That is, a leader is someone who plays a role in the journey of a group of people...The leader is an individual who gives direction, guidance, and serves as a compass to the group so that it may achieve its common goal. (journal, male student)

My project is about my journey with outdoor leadership. The feet represent the path that I have taken to get where I am going. Surrounding the footsteps are the things that I have had to learn to accept in my journey. I am not sure where my footsteps are going to take me. All I know is that I am not the person that I was. My leadership and followership have helped me to become more confident. (final creative project, female student)

I would like to tell you about a recent journey I took
A journey of self-exploration
My journey began, alone, at the bottom of Mount Seek-Me...
I felt myself becoming part of a group, me and all the wonders of nature...
My goal now seemed unimportant
It no longer mattered if I reached the top
I had discovered the true purpose of my journey
Self-Exploration.
(final creative project, female student)

This reflects Bennis (1985; p. 9), when he states that "...becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It's precisely that simple, and it's also that difficult." It is a process of inventing oneself as an ethical outdoor leader.

Finally, the specifics of "the journey" were different for men and women in the class. The class itself was approximately

evenly split between men and women. The journals revealed that the women wrote consistently about the issues of gender, leadership, and potential differences. Readings that focused on the styles and challenges for women as leaders were approximately 50% of the readings for the class and were vital to the reflections and understandings of ethical outdoor leadership for the women in the class (Hagborg, 1984; Kokopeli & Lakey, 1983; Mitten, 1985). The men, on the other hand, consistently avoided the issue in their journals by not responding to those particular readings.

> *I have traditionally considered only men as leaders. When I have seen a woman in a leadership context, I have scrutinized and analyzed her every action to compare her actions with mine in order to learn a potentially better way of doing things. (journal, male student)*

> *After reading Helgessen (1990), I feel less intimidated and actually can visualize myself managing and leading an activity...Her examples of leaders and leadership include children, relationships, and home life. I can relate to these examples. (journal, female student)*

One specific class activity, an initiative task, was the basis for significant insight for several women in the class as demonstrated in their journals. The same task was not described in any of the journals of the male students. A guest instructor facilitated an initiative activity in a nearby city park. Several of the women decided not to participate in the activity or were unable to complete the task successfully. In their journals and upon reflection, they identified the ability not to participate, the concern for safety, and the support during failure as critical points in their own development.

> *I thoroughly enjoyed the activities even though I did not attempt the rope climb. I appreciated the fact that I had total locus of control, that I had freedom of choice, that there was absolutely no pressure to participate. [A male guest instructor] alleviated all anxiety producing tension when he stated there was absolutely no pressure to participate. (journal, female student)*

> *We had to work together...realize that not all of us had the confidence or the ability to climb the bridge and would need special attention by more confident others...It was the combination of these things as well as the encouragement I received personally from other group members that convinced me to attempt the task despite an overwhelming fear of heights. As a result, even though I was unable to complete the physical component of the task, because we are now more able to understand each other's feelings as we are coming together as a group, I still felt a part of the group and was able to take part in their sense of accomplishment. (journal, female student)*

It is important to notice that the issue of safety was a high priority for female students, and this was consistent with the class readings about women and adventure trips and women's style of leadership (Barrentine, 1993; Elgin, 1989; Jordan, 1991; Mitten, 1985; Mitten & Dutton, 1993; Roberts & Drogin, 1993; Wheeler & Chinn, 1989). In addition, it is also noteworthy that through connection and support the women felt a sense of achievement and participation even though they may not have physically attempted nor completed the initiative task.

The journals of the male students did not reveal the same self-reflection. The exercise at the park was not mentioned in any of the journals written by the men. Although there was a change in their own concepts of self, their journals gave fewer hints about when and how the change occurred. A gender difference seemed to exist considering the issue of safety as a component of connection that provides a basis for learning in risk tasks for women. On the other hand, the journals by the male students gave little hints about their own internal processes and feelings related to safety and risk. This lack of text provided us with little, if any, understanding of the difference and a definite need for research in the future.

Connections Between Ethical Leadership, the Outdoors, and Outdoor Leadership

The class was specifically designed to interweave the concepts of ethical leadership, practices of outdoor leadership, and the

outdoors. The analysis of this cluster of topics indicated that the students wrote little about the connection between the three themes.

The students related ethical leadership models to the practices of outdoor leadership through (1) the use of hypothetical outdoor situations or (2) the analysis of personal outdoor situations that had gone awry. When choosing hypothetical problems or situations, the students took a very distant, analytical frame of reference as exemplified by one student, who had never tried mountain climbing, discussing the need for giving reassurance to women during a mountain climbing program and the necessity for a specific leadership style:

> *As a result women participating in a mountain climbing program may need more reassurance, guidance and emotional support than men...the leader needed for a beginner mountain climber program may have more success with a take charge autocratic style. (journal, female student)*

Another student applied Hagborg's (1984) model of power to a difficult and unresolved conflict among her camp staff. Through the model, the student was able to identify where the analysis and choice of action had gone wrong and what she could do to resolve the conflict better next time. The "journey" of leadership for the students involved the application of the concepts primarily from ethical leadership readings, the class activities and discussions related to their daily lives rather than applying them to outdoor leadership practices. For instance, journal entries related how a student had applied the principles of active listening at a job as an aerobics instructor.

The students wrote about the outdoors in a personal context and related to minimum impact practices. The students' memories of personal trips with family and friends were a vital part of why they liked being, working or playing in the outdoors. Therefore, specific practices that protected the out-of-doors were very important. Although most of the students believed they were environmentally sound campers, the readings (Cole & Hampton, 1988; Hunt, 1990) provided new insights. Many of the students simply summarized or listed all of the points related to minimum impact camping in their journals, with no associated reflection or elaboration.

The most surprising outcome of the analysis was the lack of connection between the readings on outdoor leadership practices and themselves. The class content included a variety of readings on outdoor leadership and programs, outdoor activities, and analysis of outdoor trip events. Although most of the students had experience in outdoor adventure and participated in class activities focused on the outdoors, their journals reflected very little connection between outdoor leadership practices (whether from the readings or personal experience in that position) and themselves. We had hoped to see students reflect about themselves as outdoor leaders or make points about leadership characteristics and support these positions with quotes from readings about outdoor leadership and ethical leadership. The students journals reflected very few of these connections.

Conclusion

This phenomenological explanation suggests that in order to become ethical outdoor leaders, students must first develop a self-concept that includes ethical outdoor leadership. The students' ability to conceive of themselves as leaders seems to be a key issue in the development and application of ethical outdoor leadership skills. The journals point toward self-reflective processes and personal, psychological application of concepts and models as key elements of that conceptual shift. The students had to struggle to apply specific ethical leadership concepts, attributes, skills and thinking strategies to their own self-concepts, which eventually led them to re-assess their capabilities and willingness to become ethical outdoor leaders. Consistent with writings and scholarship on ethical leadership, the process of reflecting upon experience and its relationship to oneself was an important component of the class that supported the students' journey toward ethical outdoor leadership.

Additionally, the analysis revealed a gender difference related to elements that

support this change in self-concept. For women, the identification as an ethical outdoor leader seemed to involve overcoming the assumption and societal reality that leaders are normally male, resolving issues related to safety, security and physical risk, and developing connections and support systems within the group itself. How these elements support, enhance and even create space for developing a sense of self as an ethical outdoor leader for women needs more exploration.

The students in this class saw the role of leadership primarily as a "hands-on," complete-a-task activity. For instance, the initiative activity was held about one-third of the way through the class. During the processing portion, the students stated this was their first opportunity to do something practical in class, despite the fact that previous classes included student-led discussions, student led development and implementation of a peer evaluation system, and student led activities. If the students do not connect such things as communicating values, expressing one's values and perspectives through words, and creating constructive and positive feedback systems as part of ethical outdoor leadership, then these tasks will not be connected to the responsibilities of an ethical outdoor leader. This is particularly disturbing in light of the scholarship on ethical leadership that indicates these are the most vital of the responsibilities and tasks of an ethical leader (Autry, 1992; Bennis, 1989; Burns, 1989; Helgessen, 1990; Shapiro, 1988).

Although this study did not investigate the role of the instructor and style of instruction, the journals contained three comments related to this issue. The role of the instructor was to ask questions that focused on the process in the here-and-now and reflection upon individual and group actions. This strategy was to support the students in learning to lead by leading and inventing their own group processes and interactions. The students stated that they needed the instructor to believe in them and wait for the students to find their own paths. The students' evaluation was best summarized by the following quote:

> *Although I look back at the times I was discouraged due to the lack of direction, I now realize the wealth of knowledge I have gained...classes like these made us experience thinking and facilitate for ourselves.... This experience has made us realize that there are more effective ways of learning than totally being directed by the instructor and his/her lectures.... I am glad that [the instructor] did not give in halfway through the term like we often wished... because this made us realize we were on our own and we soon came together.... I am sure the class would agree that this experience has taught us a great deal of knowledge about ourselves, our class, and about outdoor leadership and people in general. (journal, female student)*

It seems that there is much work to be done to connect recent developments in ethical leadership to the field of outdoor leadership. The students did not clearly see connections between ethical decision-making, creating a vision, empowering participants and the skills of outdoor leadership such as safety, minimum impact camping, managing group dynamics, and kayaking. This may be due to the fact that basic competency in skills simply provides the basis for leadership. It may also be attributed to the fact that students see activities and information within a class structure as theoretical. It may, however, indicate that we have not clearly connected the practices and skills to the more complex and abstract notions of ethical outdoor leadership. As the field of outdoor recreation and adventure programming addresses societal and cultural issues, leaders within the field will need to speak to the vision and commitments required to link the concepts of ethical leadership with the specific practices of outdoor leadership. This action will require us to share our values and selves with our followers through our outdoor leadership training and education.

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